

## PROJECT SUMMARY

**County:** Sierra

**Applicant:** California Rangeland Trust

**Project Title:** CRT Conservation Easement Grant Request - Maddalena Ranch

### PROJECT GOAL

Secure Grant from SNC to partially fund Conservation Easement acquisition costs for the Maddalena Ranch, a working cattle ranch located in the Sierra Valley, SNC North Central Sierra Sub-Region.

### PROJECT SCOPE

The California Rangeland Trust (Rangeland Trust) is a California non-profit corporation whose mission is to conserve the open space, natural habitat and stewardship provided by California ranches. The Rangeland Trust currently holds conservation easements on over 184,000 acres throughout California. Of that, over 29,000 acres are located within the Sierra Nevada region, and was achieved by collaborating with organizations such as the Wildlife Conservation Board, the Nature Conservancy and Sierra Business Council.

Using the Rangeland Assessment Grant provided by SNC earlier in 2008, the Rangeland Trust has evaluated thirteen working cattle ranches within five of the six SNC Sub-regions, ranking them in terms of resource issues, cultural/historic issues, and economic/community issues. The Maddalena Ranch (Ranch) in Sierra County placed among the top four candidates, therefore, the Rangeland Trust wishes to hereby submit a Competitive Grant application to partially fund the acquisition of a conservation easement for this Ranch.

This 1,200-acre working cattle Ranch is located in the southwestern part of Sierra Valley where the Rangeland Trust has already conserved over 29,000 acres in easements. The Ranch is mostly grazing lands with three year-round creeks, which are in the Feather River watershed. The Ranch provides important habitat for three species of concern including the bald eagle, Plumas ivesia and sticky pyrocoma as well as numerous other species. The Ranch family desires to place the 743 acres into a conservation easement for several reasons, which include: 1) maintain the substantial wildlife and habitat values as well as the riparian and wetland values, 2) maintain the abundant water which is important to this Ranch and down stream users, 3) maintain the scenic qualities of the land, 4) maintain the open space and historical values, 5) protect the Ranch from threatening residential growth in the Tahoe/ Truckee area.

The larger project goal is to expand the conservation of the Sierra Valley area, which encompasses 100,000 acres in Plumas and Sierra Counties and is known as the largest alpine valley in North America. Including the conservation easements held by the Rangeland Trust, almost 34,000 acres are under conservation in addition to land owned by the United States Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management. There are also approximately 50,000 acres in Sierra Valley that are under Williamson Act. This grant request along with the Rangeland Trust grant request for the Goodwin Ranches would add over 7,600 acres to this total, expanding the preservation of the Sierra Nevada's resources. (Refer to Sierra Valley Regional Map included under Tab 8)

The Rangeland Trust and the landowners have agreed upon conservation easement terms and the appraisal, which was funded by the Sierra Business Council, will be completed by September 30<sup>th</sup>. The Rangeland Trust will be applying to the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) or an alternative funding source to fund the balance of the acquisition. When funding is available and the due diligence tasks have been completed satisfactorily, the Rangeland Trust will close escrow thereby recording the Conservation Easement Deed to be followed by an annual monitoring program.

### LETTERS OF SUPPORT

- Paul Hardy, Feather River Land Trust, California Department of Fish and Game, California Cattlemen's Association

### SNC PROJECT DELIVERABLES AND SCHEDULE

DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
Submit Grant Application to WCB or Alternative Funding Source	Oct 2008
<b>SNC Grant Authorization</b>	<b>Mar 2009</b>
Start: Escrow Instructions & Preliminary Title Report	May 2009
Complete Baseline Conditions Report	Sep 2009
Complete Phase I Environmental Site Assessment Report	Sep 2009
Complete Conservation Easement Document & Monitoring Protocol	Oct 2009
<b>Submit Progress Report to SNC</b>	<b>Nov 2009</b>
Secure Funding from SNC	Dec 2009
Secure Funding from WCB or Alternative Funding Source	Dec 2009
Close Escrow and Record Conservation Easement	Dec 2009
Erect Signage and Send out Press Release	Jan 2010
<b>Final Report/Final Payment Request</b>	<b>Feb 2010</b>
Conduct First Annual Monitoring Visit	Jun 2010

### SNC PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	TOTAL SNC FUNDING
Conservation Easement Acquisition Funds – SNC	\$ 873,000.00
Escrow Fees, Title Insurance, Closing Costs	\$ 65,000.00
Rangeland Trust Monitoring Endowment	\$ 10,000.00
Rangeland Trust Legal Defense Fund	\$ 6,000.00
Rangeland Trust Directly Related Administrative Costs	\$ 35,000.00
Rangeland Trust Performance Measures & Reporting	\$ 10,000.00
Rangeland Trust Hard Costs	\$ 1,000.00
<b>SNC GRANT TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,000,000.00</b>
Appraisal Report (Paid by Sierra Business Council)	\$ 7,200.00
Due Diligence – Baseline Report, Phase I ESA Report	\$ 15,000.00
Conservation Easement Acquisition Funds – WCB or Alternative Source	\$ 327,000.00 (estimate)
<b>TOTAL PROJECT COST</b>	<b>\$1,349,200.00</b> (estimate)